modernise China's British nationalism.... 1950s, and not just in France.

G-man's G-string

IT IS hard to see why there is such a fuss over "Official and Confidential: The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hoover" by Anthony Summers (G.P. Putnam & Sons; 528 pages; $25.95. Gollancz; £14.99). Most of its credible disclosures are old hat. The FBI director's rumoured homosexual relationship with Clyde Tolson was common gossip in Washington long before his death in 1972. Everybody everywhere knew that Hoover hated radical blacks and left-wingers of all colours. Criticism of his reluctance to take on the Mafia was a commonplace. And even Martians must by now have heard that some presidents were loth to scold, let alone to sack, Hoover lest he spill the beans on their misdeeds.

The book contains some truly sensational revelations, but they are about as convincing as the scandal sheets at supermarket check-out counters. The Mafia hiring Lee Harvey Oswald to assassinate President Kennedy, for instance. Or, more implausibly still, the disclosure that Hoover and Roy Cohn, another notorious Red-baiter, liked dressing up in women's clothes to partake in sexual orgies with Aryan-looking boys. If this, or anything like it, had really happened, it would have become public knowledge donkey's years ago. The many people in the media who had reason to bear Hoover a grudge would have seen to that.

THE ECONOMIST MARCH 6TH 1993

Dear Jim 3/24/93

Getting this today reminded me of what I'd intending telling you when last I wrote.

As the note with this from the British friend who sent it says, the Economists say what I'd told him. And a few others

Tony spent much time here. So also did the two college professors who came from London to help him. Collectively they took much time, had the free run of my files and copier and as you may remember, I had one hell of a time and it took much and repeated effort to get the transcribing machine I'd loaned Tony when he was too cheap to buy one and that poor woman helping him had had to transcribe his interviews with a small tape recorder. I suppose this is because he had so small and advance, a mere three-quarters of a million dollars. What I may not have told you earlier is that years ago I learned from a Swede that when he had asked Tony why he had not consulted me for information, words to this effect, not verbatim, Tony wrote him that he had asked and I had refused. I have the letter. Fact is that when he was writing Conspiracy at Chadd's Ford I did invite him here. He had called to ask permission to use something from O in NO, saying he would credit it. He didn't and without a word of complaint from me, he later wrote and apologized for his oversight. I suppose he'd heard from people about it. Well, the Hoover book is out, I've seen a few reviews and that it is a best seller and, fortunately, I've not been asked about it. Because if I had I'd have responded without having read the book. Or needing to. Tony is so cheap a "dirt bag" whatever that means in Ireland - it was used to describe him by an Irishman who knew him in Ireland - I am inclined to believe it is praise. With all that advance and all he got here free and all the time he took he was so damned cheap he did not send me a book. Or can it be that after reading it I'd have made the comment the Economist did and he knew I would. So much for his personal integrity, the kind of man he is. From this review it is apparent that like so many of the whores who profit from this great national tragedy he assumes Oswald's guilt. Or is this not for the first time? He and the growing multitude like him make those who sell sex seem honorable and decent by comparison. While based on his past I suppose I should have expected something like this and what he evolved, I really did not expect him to foul his own nest and to destroy the credibility of what could and should have been a fine and a worthwhile book given the resources he had, his ability and the willingness of so many of us to help him. With friends like him, who has any need of enemies?

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